Amendment to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraphs on page 3, lines 13-18, as follows:

FIGURE 1 is a cross-sectional ~~an elevation~~ view of the apparatus of one embodiment of the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is a cross-sectional ~~an elevation~~ view of an embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention showing the film shirred thereon.

FIGURE 3 is a cross-sectional ~~an elevation~~ view of an embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention showing the netting rucked thereon.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 4, line17, as follows

The netting tube 20 comprises an elongated tube 21 welded to a transition plate 22 at its upstream end 24. The netting tube 20 holds netting 50 in a conventional way, such as outer tube 24 as described in United States Patent No. 4,958,477. The netting tube 20 of the present invention, however, unlike the outer tube of the '477 patent, attaches to the shir housing 10. Preferably, fasteners sold under the brand name Quick Locks® are used, but any convenient means of attachment will suffice, such as bayonet pins, locking pins, threaded fasteners, interference fit, or anything else that attaches the transition plate 22 of the netting tube 20 to the shir housing 10. The netting 50 of the present invention is of a smaller diameter than the diameter of the tubular film 40.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 12, as follows:

In use, therefore, the filling horn 30 protrudes from the sausage-making machine and has a length of tubular edible collagen film 40 shirred onto it. The film 40 is protected by the shir housing 10 which surrounds the netting tube 20 near the upstream end 24 of the netting tube 20. The netting tube 20 extends downstream from the shir housing 10 and holds the netting 50 in place. A conventional clipper 62 ~~60~~ is located at the downstream end 34 of the filling horn 30.

Please amend the paragraphs beginning on page 5, line 19, as follows:

The method of the present invention is illustrated in block diagram form in Figure 4. In use, the tubular film 40 is shirred onto the filling horn 30 (step 100) and past the downstream end 32 of the filling horn 30, which is then placed on the shir housing (step 100). The netting tube 20, with netting 50 rucked onto it (step 104), is locked in place to the shir housing 10 (step 102) and over the filling horn 30, using means 28 (step 106). The end of the netting 50 and the end of the film 40 are clipped in a conventional manner (step 108). This clip will become one end of the first sausage made by the apparatus 2. (Please note, however, that the first sausage is likely to contain quite a bit of air. It is recommended to bleed as much air out of the system as possible before applying the first clip.)

The sausage meat, having been made in the sausage-making machine, is extruded under pressure in a conventional manner into the upstream end 32 of the filling horn 30 (step 110). As the sausage meat progresses down the filling horn 30, it pushes the tubular film 40 off the filling horn 30 and out the downstream end of the apparatus 2. As the film 40 is pushed off the filling horn 30, it expands outward against the netting 50. Since the netting 50 is of a smaller diameter than that of the film 40, the film 40 will bulge through the spaces in the netting 50, creating the dimpled appearance that is an object of the invention.

After a sufficient length of sausage has been extruded, the clipper 62 squeezes the netting 50 and film 40, applies two clips, and severs the sausage in a conventional manner (step 112). The sausage is now ready for further processing. The process continues as set forth above (step 114).